

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 20, 2005. Claims 1-3, 5-21, 23-33 and 36-40 are pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 9, 17, 19 and 27 are in independent form. Claims 9, 17 and 27 have been rewritten as independent claims. Claims 4 and 22 have been canceled and their recitations incorporated into Claims 1 and 19, respectively; this action is taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 3, 5-7, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23-25, 28-30, 33, 36-39 have been amended as to matters of form only, to ensure consistency of terminology, and/or correct claim dependency. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

An Information Disclosure Statement and a corresponding Form PTO-1449 was filed on January 12, 2005, as evidenced by the returned receipt postcard bearing the stamp of the Patent and Trademark Office, a copy of which is attached hereto. Applicant respectfully request the Examiner to return an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449, indicating the reference cited thereon was considered.

Claims 32 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has carefully reviewed and amended those claims to correct claim dependency. It is believed that the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph, has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his indication that Claims 4-6, 9-11, 17, 18, 22-24, 27-29 and 33 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, Applicant has amended each of Claims 9, 17 and 27 into independent form, and consequently these claims are also seen to be in condition for allowance. In addition, independent Claims 1 and 19, the base Claims of Claims 4 and 22, have been rewritten to include the recitations of allowable Claims 4 and 22, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 1 and 19 are also now in condition for allowance.

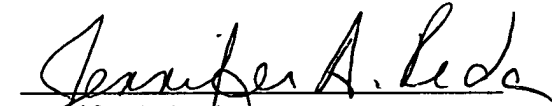
Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 12-16, 19-21, 25, 26, 30-32 and 36-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,434,265 *Xiong et al.* Claim 40 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Xiong et al.* Independent Claims 1, 9, 17, 19 and 27 are seen to be in condition for allowance for the reasons noted above. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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